

Message Text

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51

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 AID-05 CPR-01 TRSE-00 OPIC-03 CIEP-01 IO-10

COME-00 EUR-12 /087 W

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R 221105Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0000

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KATHMANDU 1864

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NP, US

SUBJECT: IMPRESSIONS FROM THE FIRST DAYS IN OFFICE OF
THE NEW FOREIGN MINISTER

1. SUMMARY: PROSPECTS ARE THAT ARYAL'S APPOINTMENT AS FOREIGN MINISTER WILL NOT AFFECT NEPALESE POLICIES IN BASIC WAYS, PARTICULARLY SINCE ALL MAJOR DECISIONS WILL CONTINUE TO BE TAKEN BY THE PALACE. ARYAL HAS MADE CLEAR THAT HE VALUES NEPAL'S TIES WITH THE UNITED STATES AND WORKING RELATIONS WITH HIM ARE EXPECTED TO BE GOOD. END SUMMARY

2. THE SECRETARY'S CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE TO THE NEW FOREIGN MINISTER (STATE 085364) ARRIVED IN SUCH TIMELY FASHION THAT IT RECEIVED FRONT PAGE COVERAGE IN THE SAME ISSUE OF RISING NEPAL THAT ANNOUNCED THE APPOINTMENT OF THE NEW CABINET. PROMPTNESS AND CONTENT OF THE MESSAGE WERE WIDELY AND FAVORABLY NOTED BY THE NEPALESE AND ARYAL REMARKED TO ME WITH PLEASURE THAT THE SECRETARY'S MESSAGE WAS THE FIRST TO REACH HIM.

3. ARYAL IS MOVING WITH DELIBERATION INTO HIS NEW ROLE AS FOREIGN MINISTER, WORKING HIS WAY THROUGH PROTOCOL CALLS AND BRIEFINGS. I HAD SOME OFFICIAL DEALINGS WITH HIM IN HIS

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EARLIER CAPACITY AS EDUCATION MINISTER AS WELL AS FREQUENT

SOCIAL CONTACT AND EXPECT OUR PERSONAL RELATIONS TO CONTINUE TO BE GOOD.

4. ON THE POLICY LEVEL, IT IS EVIDENT THAT ARYAL WILL SEEK TO CONTINUE THE BASICALLY COOPERATIVE AND FRIENDLY PATTERN THAT HAS CHARACTERIZED U.S.-NEPALESE RELATIONSHIPS IN THE PAST. IN MY INITIAL CALL ON HIM TODAY (APRIL 22), HE EXPRESSED WARM APPRECIATION FOR U.S. COOPERATION AND SUPPORT AND GON HOPES THAT U.S. WILL MAINTAIN ITS PROGRAMS AND PRESENCE IN NEPAL. WHEN I REMARKED THAT KING BIRENDRA HAD STRESSED TO ME THE IMPORTANCE HE ATTACHEDS TO THE U.S. PRESENCE IN NEPAL, ARYAL SAID THIS WAS A GUIDELINE OF GON POLICY. I TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO OUTLINE BRIEFLY THE BASIC FEATURES OF OUR PRESENCE AND OUR PROGRAMS IN NEPAL AND ALSO RECALLED AS A PART OF THIS PICTURE THE SUBSTANTIAL U.S. CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MULTILATERAL PROGRAMS HERE OF UNDP, THE WORLD BANK, THE ADB AND THE UN SPECIALIZED AGENCIES. I FIND THIS A GOOD POINT TO EMPHASIZE ON OCCASION BECAUSE IT TENDS TO BE OVERLOOKED, AND IT REGISTERED WITH ARYAL.

5. ARYAL UNDERSTANDABLY DID NOT SAY MUCH ON SUBSTANTIVE POLICY TODAY. HE DID SAY HE WOULD WELCOME A LATER DISCUSSION WITH ME OF THE NONALIGNED PHENOMENA AND RELATED PROBLEMS, A SUBJECT I HAD COMMENTED ON BRIEFLY. IN ADDITION TO HIS EXPRESSIONS CONCERNING THE IMPORTANCE OF THE U.S.- NEPALESE RELATIONSHIP, HE DID EMPHASIZE THAT HE WILL KEEP IN CLOSE COMMUNICATION WITH HIS TWO LARGE NEIGHBORS. HE VOICED MUTED, BUT EVIDENT, CONCERN OVER RELATIONS WITH INDIA AND FUTURE INDIAN POLICY TOWARD NEPAL. HE ALSO TOOK A SHARP CRACK AT THE SOVIET UNION AS "A CERTAIN BIG POWER" WHICH SUPPORTS INDIAN AIMS IN NEPAL.

6. THE NEW FOREIGN MINISTER MADE NO REFERENCE TO SIKKIM, THEREBY PARALLELLING THE CAUTIOUS LINE BEING FOLLOWED BY BOTH PRESS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALSH KATHMANDU 1852).

7. IN ALL OF THE ABOVE RESPECTS ARYAL THUS FAR STRIKES ME AS CONTINUITY, NOT CHANGE, IN NEPALESE FOREIGN POLICY.

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